

IN THE CLAIMS

17. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing an alkenyl aryl, which process comprises:

preparing an alkylaryl hydroxide containing product, by a process comprising:

- (a) oxidating an alkylaryl compound to obtain reaction product containing alkylaryl hydroperoxide;
- (b) contacting with water at least part of the alkylaryl hydroperoxide containing reaction product obtained in step (a) which reaction product contains less than 0.05 %wt of sodium;
- (c) separating the product of step (b) into a hydrocarbonaceous phase containing alkylaryl hydroperoxide and an aqueous phase;
- (d) optionally repeating process steps (b) and (c) one or more times;
- (e) contacting at least part of the hydrocarbonaceous phase containing alkylaryl hydroperoxide obtained in step (c) or (d) with olefin and catalyst to obtain alkylaryl hydroxide and oxirane compound;
- (f) separating at least part of the oxirane compound from the alkylaryl hydroxide; and,

~~converting~~ dehydrating at least part of the alkylaryl hydroxide obtained in step (f) to an alkenyl aryl.

18. (Original) The process of claim 17 which process further comprises distilling the product obtained in step (c) or (d), and sending to step (e) hydrocarbonaceous phase from which light compounds have been distilled off.

19. (Original) The process of claim 18 in which process steps (b) and (c) are carried out in an extraction column.

20. (Original) The process of claim 19 in which process the product sent to step (b) further contains less than 0.05 wt% of potassium.